

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION OECD PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L COPENHAGEN 0310

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PO, DA

SUBJECT: CONSULTATION ON PORTUGAL

REF: STATE 22603 AND 23905

1. WITH THE DEPARTMENT'S INSTRUCTIONS IN HAND I SAW MFA
PERMANENT UNDER SECRETARY EIGIL JORGENSEN FEBRUARY 4
AND STRESSED TO HIM OUR CONCERN ABOUT THE SITUATION IN
PORTUGAL AND ASKED HOW THE DANES VIEWED THE SITUATION AND
WHAT THEY THOUGHT THEY COULD DO TO HELP. JORGENSEN SAID
THAT HE HAD RECENTLY HAD A LENGTHY DISCUSSION WITH PORTUGUESE
AMBASSADOR DA COSTA VAZ WHO HAD TOLD HIM THAT IF ELECTIONS
WERE HELD THIS SPRING THE COMMUNISTS WOULD GET ONLY
ABOUT 10 PER CENT OF THE VOTE WHICH WAS THE REASON THEY WERE
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NOW ENCOURAGING POLITICAL DISRUPTION TO GET ELECTIONS POST-

PONED. (IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION, JORGENSEN SAID HE DID NOT KNOW HOW CLOSE THE PORTUGUESE AMBASSADOR WAS TO THE ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT, ALTHOUGH HE DID KNOW THAT THE AMBASSADOR HAD BEEN SENT HERE AFTER THE EVENTS OF LAST APRIL.) WHEN JORGENSEN HAD ASKED DA COSTA VAZ ABOUT FOEGIN INFLUENCE ON THE POLITICAL SCENE IN PORTUGAL, THE AMBASSADOR HAD REPLIED THAT THERE WAS UNDOUBTEDLY SOME INFLUENCE. HE DID NOT FEEL, HOWEVER, THAT THE COMMUNISTS WERE GREATLY INFLUENCED BY THE FRENCH AND ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTIES BECAUSE THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNISTS WERE MUCH MORE RADICAL THAN THE MORE TRADITIONALLY-ORIENTED WESTERN EUROPEAN PARTIES.

2. JORGENSEN SAID THAT THE PROBLEM IS TO DECIDE WHAT CAN BE DONE IN PORTUGAL. PUBLIC OPINION, AT LEAST IN DENMARK AND PROBABLY ELSEWHERE IN THE FREE WORLD, IS STRONGLY IN FAVOR OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF DEMOCRACY IN PORTUGAL, SO THERE IS NO REAL PROBLEM IN THAT AREA. THE NEXT QUESTION IS WHAT SORT OF IMPACT OTHER COUNTRIES COULD HAVE ON PORTUGAL. HE DOUBTED WHETHER DENMARK ALONE COULD DO MUCH, BUT PERHAPS THE EC COULD. IN FACT, THE EC AND THE US WORKING TOGETHER WOULD PROBABLY BE ABLE TO HAVE CONSIDERABLE IMPACT. HE ADMITTED THAT THUS FAR THE DANES THEMSELVES HAVE DONE COMPARATIVELY LITTLE, AND REALISTICALLY NOT MUCH MORE COULD BE EXPECTED IN THE WAY OF MATERIAL SUPPORT UNTIL THE COUNTRY AGAIN HAS A GOVERNMENT. AS A MATTER OF FACT, HE SAID, WE DO NOT REALLY KNOW WHAT THE PORTUGUESE WANT FROM US. WHILE THEY ARE GETTING GOOD REPORTING FROM THE DANISH AMBASSADOR IN LISBON, HE HAS APPARENTLY NOT BEEN ABLE TO ESTABLISH CLOSE CONTACT AT THE GOVERNMENT LEVEL. ON THE OTHER HAND THE SCANDINAVIAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATS, INCLUDING THE DANES, WERE CLOSE TO FOREIGN MINISTER SOARES AND HIS SOCIALISTS, BUT HOW STRONG IS HE? WITH THE PRIME MINISTER MORE PRONOUNCEDLY LEFTIST, HOW MUCH INFLUENCE DO THE PORTUGUESE SOCIALISTS HAVE?

3. JORGENSEN CONCLUDED BY SAYING THEY WOULD CERTAINLY LIKE TO HELP MORE BUT THEY COULD DO LITTLE UNDER THEIR PRESENT CARETAKER GOVERNMENT. I GAVE HIM SENATOR KENNEDY'S STATEMENT WHICH I SAID ILLUSTRATES THE BIPARTISAN FEELING ABOUT

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PORTUGAL WITHIN THE US.

4. COMMENT: WHILE THIS CONVERSATION WENT ABOUT AS I EXPECTED, I WAS INTERESTED IN JORGENSEN'S THOUGHT THAT IF THE EC AND THE US WORKED TOGETHER THEY MIGHT BE ABLE TO HAVE SOME REAL IMPACT IN THE PRESENT PORTUGUESE SITUATION. IT SEEMS TO ME THIS MIGHT WELL BE A LEADING POINT FOR DISCUSSION IN OUR POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS WITH THE EC COUNTRIES.

5. I AM HAVING LUNCH WITH PORTUGUESE AMBASSADOR DA COSTA
VAZ FEBRUARY 10 AND WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR ANYTHING THE
DPEARTMENT OR LISBON WOULD WANT TO LET ME HAVE FOR
USE WITH HIM.
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